

CHAPTER 11

Arranging Visits for Dignitaries

GENERAL GUIDELINES

The aide or visits officer who is required to handle local arrangements for the visit of a U.S. or foreign dignitary, and perhaps his wife/her husband, necessarily confronts certain logistic, social and protocol-related problem areas. Often the itinerary has been clearly delineated by higher authority and local programming of its execution is all that is required. Unfortunately, however, troublesome details often fail to occur to the novice planner until difficulties develop. The following guidelines are provided to help eliminate problems.

PLANNING

The most minute detail of the visit must be carefully planned and a realistic amount of time allotted. The names of all persons who are in any way associated with the visit, their exact duties and schedules, and the minutia concerning transportation of persons and luggage should all be laid out well in advance of the arrival of the dignitary. The following should be accomplished during the planning phase:

1. Ensure that all arrangements, including reservations for hotels and restaurants are in writing.
2. Ensure that dignitaries will be met and bade farewell by officers of commensurate rank whenever this is possible. As a general rule, this requires that a flag officer be present at the arrival and departure of a flag officer that is on an official visit.
3. Ensure that all drivers of the official party are briefed regarding their schedules and are given explicit directions in order that they may operate independently if they become separated from the other cars.
4. Prepare a folio, which contains at least a map of the area, the local schedule, and lists of room assignments and telephone numbers for presentation to each member of the visiting party.
5. Provide billeting for the U.S. escort officer in the same building as the dignitary whenever possible. Otherwise, make adequate transportation available to this escort.
6. Provide sufficient time in the schedule not only for meetings, calls, meals, etc., but also for changes of clothes, coffee breaks, occasional rest periods, and transportation. The planner should actually time the travel from place to place and allow extra time for boarding vehicles and baggage transfer.
7. Foreign dignitaries are usually accompanied by one or more aides of their own armed service. Frequently, the latter are officers of the highest caliber who are destined for future positions of authority in their country. They often form lasting impressions about the United States and the Navy on the basis of the treatment accorded them as members of a visiting party. Special attention should also be given to their transportation, dining, and recreational arrangements and needs.

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8. It is important to consider the cultural background of visiting foreign dignitaries and accommodate wherever possible individual religious preferences, food or beverage restrictions. Minimally, their living accommodations should be single rooms in hotels and in BOQs where room assignments should be made in keeping with their status as members of a dignitary's party rather than their rank.

9. Give careful attention to scheduling the itineraries of spouses of guests, especially those of foreign guests. After determining their interests and programming them insofar as possible, plan additionally:

a. Sight-seeing trips to view places of historic interest, scenery, or whatever the local area best affords.

b. Shopping tours, provided excellent stores offering American-made products area available. These may include fashion shows.

c. Spouse luncheons. When the dignitary is given a stag luncheon, the spouse should be given a luncheon by the U.S. host/hostess or by another high-ranking official's spouse. Not only American officials' spouses should attend, but also notable local citizenry including those of the same national origin as the guest and spouses of consular officials in the area, etc., should be invited.

d. Teas hosted by one or several U.S. spouses to honor the visitor and companions.

10. When planning gift exchange between a visiting foreign dignitary and his/her host, careful attention must be given to the amount expended for the gifts. Specific guidelines for gift exchange are found in the Official Representation Fund Instruction (SECNAVINST 7042.7J). If a visiting foreign dignitary is from one of the Latin American countries, guidelines are found in SECNAVINST 7042.13A.

11. It is often helpful to prepare a checklist when planning any visit in order to avoid any oversights.

THE ESCORT OFFICER

The local escort officer should be carefully chosen and briefed on all facets of the local schedule, including potential problems and their probably best solutions. A written or oral briefing should also be provided the U.S. escort officer who will be accompanying a foreign dignitary throughout the entire tour. Such briefings should include the following often-overlooked items.

1. Establish the uniform requirements for all planned activities. Ensure that escorts know that they too must be in the requisite uniform for each event.

2. Ensure the local escort officer keeps the U.S. escort officer apprised of the schedule and any changes thereto, and makes every attempt to avoid the element of surprise. The U.S. escort officer should be consulted in order to keep abreast of any special requests or desires of the dignitary.

3. Ensure that both escort officers know the local short-notice cleaning facilities that exist, and facilitate any cleaning desired by the dignitary or escort.

4. Inform the U.S. escort officer of the toasts that will be offered at formal luncheons and dinners and of the appropriate responses thereto. Also notify him/her of any speeches or press interviews, which may have been scheduled in keeping with the desires of the dignitary.

5. Provide the escorts with information or reference material concerning the handling of any emergency regarding messing, transportation, medical needs, etc. that may arise.

Whenever possible the U.S. escort officer should participate in the events scheduled for the dignitary since he/she is the personal representative of the U.S. host, and his/her stature in the visitor's eyes should be preserved. Occasionally, space may preclude the escort's inclusion in certain social events. Then, other provisions for the escort's entertainment should be made by the activity.

It is wise to provide an escort for a foreign wife, taking into consideration any language barrier that may exist, her age, and position. Escorts may be drawn from among officers or service wives whose language capabilities, travel, or position would make them valuable to the guest.

HONORS

Honors ceremonies often cause undue consternation. *Navy Regulations* are sufficiently detailed to answer all questions that may arise concerning appropriate honors to a U.S. or foreign dignitary. Only those officials and officers specified by title or grade in *Navy Regulations* are entitled to honors.

It is noteworthy that during honors to a foreign official, either ashore or afloat, the national flag of the visitor is hoisted during the salute. If the foreign visitor is a military official, the visitor's personal flag, if provided, may be flown for honors ceremonies and from automobiles while aboard a naval activity. If no flag is provided by a foreign military officer, the appropriate flag of a U.S. Navy officer with stars equivalent to the foreigner's grade may be flown from a car, and a comparable plate shown on a military plane transporting the dignitary.

Flags for specific positions (i.e., SECNAV, CNO, VCNO, etc.) are not to be used for visitors. In these cases, either the military rank equivalent flag (for officers) or national ensign (for civilians) should be used for honor ceremonies.

During all first official visits for foreign service chiefs, the rank of the visitor is equal to that of the U.S. counterpart. Therefore, a U.S. Navy line officer four star flag is flown for visiting foreign navy chiefs (not CNO personal flag) even though the individual's military rank may be less than O-10 pay grade.

ENTERTAINMENT OF FOREIGN DIGNITARIES

There is a tendency in planning a local itinerary to resort to the more mundane type of entertainment because its frequency of occurrence makes it easiest to plan. Use distinctive local resources to vary the guests' exposure to American forms of entertainment. Also consider the feasibility of using ships' wardrooms for luncheons and/or dinners as well as the usual shore facilities. Exposure to enlarged social circles can be accomplished by having the hosting responsibility shared by different groups. Local Navy League and civic organizations are often willing to help entertain visiting dignitaries.

While it is true that it is preferable to invite persons of comparable station to a dinner or small party, it is suggested that some variety may improve larger functions such as receptions. Accordingly, an attempt should be made to include foreigners of the same national origin as the guest of honor as well as a representative selection of junior officers.

Also noteworthy, as a general rule the color white should be avoided. The color white is a sign of death and is used for funerals in many nations – mainly Far East countries. Therefore, all-white floral arrangements, white cars and white gifts and those wrapped in white should be avoided.

DIETARY RESTRICTIONS OF FOREIGN DIGNITARIES

When entertaining foreign guests, it is important to consider any dietary restrictions they may have prior to planning the menu. Avoiding these items or offering alternatives will make any event a success. Various religions have dietary restrictions such as those listed below:

Islam: Pork or pork products or food prepared by using pork products (grease) are forbidden. Alcoholic beverages are also forbidden, but may take exception to the rule. Fruit juice can be served for toasting.

Hinduism: Pork and beef or their products are forbidden. Dairy products may not be acceptable to some. Many Hindus are vegetarians.

Buddhism: No dietary restrictions, although some do not eat meat.

Judaism: Pork, shellfish, and certain parts of the cow are forbidden by Orthodox Jews. Milk and meat should not be served together; several hours must pass between consumption of these.

Mormons: Coffee, tea, and alcoholic beverages are not drunk. Many prefer plain food.

The following chart lists very general restrictions found in certain countries. This does not allow for individual dietary restrictions due to the religious, medical or personal preferences. Therefore, one should determine if any of these restrictions also exist. In general, fish and fowl are universally acceptable. When restrictions do exist, guard against serving any derivation of them. It is also wise to always have a variety of non-alcoholic beverages available to those who prefer.

RECORD OF DIETARY RESTRICTIONS

Country	No Beef	No Pork	No Restrictions	Other
Argentina			X	
Australia			X	
Austria			X	
Belgium			X	
Bolivia			X	
Brazil			X	
Bulgaria			X	
Burma			X	
Cameroon			X	
Canada			X	
Chile			X	
China			X	
Colombia			X	
Czechoslovakia			X	
Denmark			X	
Dominican Republic			X	
Ecuador			X	
Egypt		X		
El Salvador			X	
Ethiopia		X		
Finland			X	
France			X	
Germany			X	
Ghana		X		
Great Britain			X	
Greece			X	
Guatemala			X	
Haiti			X	
Honduras			X	
Hungary			X	
India	X	X		
Indonesia		X		
Iran		X		No alcohol
Israel		X		
Italy			X	
Japan			X	
Jordan		X		
Korea			X	
Lebanon		X		

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Country	No Beef	No Pork	No Restrictions	Other
Malaysia		X		
Mexico			X	
Morocco		X		
Nepal	X			
Netherlands			X	
New Zealand			X	
Nicaragua			X	
Nigeria			X	
Norway			X	
Pakistan		X		
Panama			X	
Paraguay			X	
Peru			X	
Philippines			X	
Poland			X	
Portugal			X	
Romania			X	
Russia			X	
Saudi Arabia		X		No alcohol
South Africa			X	
Spain			X	
Sri Lanka	X			No fish, no eggs
Sudan		X		
Sweden			X	
Switzerland			X	
Thailand	X			
Tunisia		X		
Turkey		X		
Uruguay			X	
Venezuela			X	
Yugoslavia			X	